**Post:**

Reading the the article on the wisest investments really hit home for me. We are currently undergoing a total rebuild of our network...new wiring, new switches, new wireless, and new V-lans. Top-flight connectivity. Given that schools have had a decade of Universal Service Fund discounts (better know as the e-Rate) for network improvements, a highspeed, stable network and Internet connectivity should be a given in all schools today. yet many schools still do not enjoy true robust, broadband connectivity.(Moore, 2006) This is by far the most important investment a school can make. Everything done with technology is dependent of the network infrastructure. In my particular situation, I fear building a stable and robust network will not be enough. Our teachers have become so accustomed the having a slow and unreliable network and Internet, it may take a long time for them to have confidence in the reliability of our new network. I have talked with many teachers who have said they don't use technology in their curriculum because it is so unreliable. I am very excited about our new network, but I realize it will take time for teachers to feel confident in its reliability. Once the teachers have confidence and they receive the proper professional development, the students will begin to receive the benefits of technology in education.

*Moore, R. J., (2006, August). The five best accelerators in school. School Administrator, 63.7, p.2.*

**Responses:**

Our teachers need to feel reasonably secure in the infrastructure otherwise it will not be utilized. “It is essential for leaders in education and government to agree that statewide educational networks are a vital part of the state’s future” (Mathews, 2004, pg. 7). Without a strong infrastructure, our teachers will not use the technology which engages our students. Our leaders need to also take into consideration the areas they are spending their funding. “Too often school districts invest in technologies because of their high-tech, 21at century appeal without fully considering their impact on student learning and long-term total cost of ownership” (Moore, 2006). We need to find a viable solution to funding and proper disbursement of funding.

Mathews, J.B. (2004, April). Why statewide educational networks are important to state and educational leaders. *Southern Regional Educational Board*. Retrieved on April 18, 2011, from http://www.sreb.org/programs/EdTech/pubs/PDF/04T02-Statewide\_Ed\_Tech\_Net\_Important.pdf

Moore, R. J., (2006, August). The five best accelerators in school. School Administrator, 63.7, p.8.

Jack, I agree. The network infrastructure is by far the most important component of a successful technology program - everything else relies on it! Like your teachers, I have experienced disappointment when trying to use a technology tool, only to find that it wouldn't work in my room - like the eInstruction mobile interactive whiteboard. It was supposed to work like a small wireless SmartBoard. The advantage was that it was much cheaper, and the teacher could walk all over the room holding the small tablet, manipulating screen images from it just like on a SmartBoard. Unfortunately, after going through the training to obtain one for my classroom, I found that the wireless connectivity did not work in my room. The building has since undergone a complete renovation, supposedly eliminating many of the problems with wireless connectivity; and, I am no longer in that classroom. Nevertheless, I haven't tried using the mobile interactive whiteboard again!

I could not agree with your more. A school district can have the best infrastructure available. However, if it does not train its teachers on how to properly use it, this investment will go to waste. It would be the same as giving an expensive car to someone that does not know how to drive. Most likely, that car will just rot in a driveway. If districts want their students to get the most out of technology and truly become competitive in its use, they must offer their teachers the proper training via different professional development sessions. Only then will the available technology be used how it was meant to be.

I agree with you completely. At my campus, we are at the end of the network flow. So, depending on the high school's use and traffic determines our speed. If it is a class period where the high school is having desktop publishing or web mastering, you can plan on Very slow speed. This makes it even more frustrating because it is hard to keep your class periods together when some classes can get more accomplished. Some of our teachers feel like it is not worth "wasting" class time because of network issues. For 50 minute class, an average class size takes about 5-10 minutes to log on, other 5-10 minutes to get everyone to the right site, and other 5 minutes to save and log off. That is at least 20 minutes of the class teachers feel is "wasted".

I agree and understand where you are coming from. Our school is having a remodel job done as well. We had a pretty stable network, but as construction goes on I see just how unstable a network can really be. Our classes are suppose to get some new technology, but even if this technology is put into place a lot of teachers will continue not to use it. I find this a bit troubling, but I can certainly understand the teachers who have been doing it for years without the technology. The one thing I have noticed is the more training and support on the technology the more likely it is the teachers will use it. I do believe it is important for teachers to use this technology to engage our students and if it takes getting the training and support to do this then that’s what needs to happen.